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THRU : Chief, S/CM, Chief, DC

3 September 1957

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Report Containing Target Date for Air Raid Shelter Preparation in Tashkent, USSR

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1. A [REDACTED] reports that a relatively urgent program for the construction of so-called "atomic" air raid shelters was carried on in Tashkent during the early months of 1957. [REDACTED] states that he and others were taken from work on the construction of a cement factory during February to prepare or modify atomic shelters. A government inspector was said to have insisted that all preparations were to be completed by 15 April 1957. Shelters with which [REDACTED] was familiar were of the basement type, although projecting partly above ground level. Roof thickness was described as twenty centimeters of reinforced concrete, and shelters were fitted with steel doors having rubber gaskets. Air filters were considered classified and installed last. [REDACTED] only saw boxed units stored in shelters.) [REDACTED] also stated that special water lines to existing shelters were being laid at a depth of 3 to 4 meters during 1956, and that in one industrial plant, a deep water well was being drilled which a worker said was to supply water in case regular or reserve reservoirs became contaminated.

2. When questioned, [REDACTED] 25X1X carefully refrained from attempting an estimate of the shelter capacity available in Tashkent. However, in the case of the industrial suburb with which he was familiar, he estimated shelter capacity at 3-4,000 for a population of about 7,000, adding that there were other new buildings being erected which were potentially useable for this purpose.

3. [REDACTED] 25X1X emphasized he had heard of atomic shelter construction at other times, but said he never noticed such "excitement or urgency" such as that which occurred in 1957. He could not say why shelters were to be made ready by mid-April 1957.

Comment: Details of this report cannot be presently confirmed. One other repatriate, who returned from Tashkent in December 1956, had heard of government orders for "atomic" shelters to be included in all new buildings.² Shelter construction has been continuing in the Soviet Bloc, but no urgent program has been previously detected.

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If true, however, the urgency of the program indicated in the present report, and the amount of shelter available are significant, at least for Tashkent. The removal of laborers from other economically important work would indicate an extremely high priority was being given to civil defense construction this year.

The report appears to be internally consistent, and the activity could be a direct result of the increased concern for atomic civil defense in the USSR evident since early 1956.

In view of KIG and INKKOO interest in items which imply deadlines for defense preparations, this information is submitted without detailed comparison or analysis.

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